



YPSI MALL

312 N River Street, Ypsilanti MI

734-483-1520

www.ypsifoodcoop.org

Local Love Fest - A Valentine's Tasting

Kombucha is a bubbly, sweet/tart fermented drink that originated in China and Russia, where it has been enjoyed for centuries. All of **Unity Vibration's** kombucha drinks are raw and living, organic, delicious, unpasteurized and naturally fermented, gluten-free, and vegan. (Kombucha beer is a great alternative to grain-brewed beers for those with celiac disease; read on.)

Kombucha contain anti-oxidants, viable probiotics, enzymes, vitamins, minerals, and vital life energy. People who drink kombucha often say it helps balance their metabolism, aids in digestion, raises energy levels, boosts the immune system, and detoxifies the body.

New to the scene are Kombucha Beers, made using 30-day brewed tea, organic dried hops and organic flavors such as raw ginger root or fresh raspberries. Kombucha beer is aged and open-air fermented in oak barrels. Kombucha pairs well with dark chocolate, savory meals, desserts, cheese, and fresh fruit.

Mindo Chocolate Makers from Dexter is creating a unique, single-origin chocolate from Ecuador, the cradle of the cacao tree. Nacional (or "criollo") beans are considered to be in the top 2% of high-quality beans. Nacional only grows in Ecuador and is known for having the best flavor of all cacao varieties. Most commercial chocolate makers use it as part of a blend to



Join us for a tasting on
Friday, Feb 15 from 4-7pm
here at the Ypsi Food Co-op

enhance the flavor of cheaper cacao beans. Mindo products all use 100% Nacional.

The company name comes from a small farm in Mindo, Ecuador where the fermentation and drying of the beans takes place. There they are also roasted, ground to nibs, and winnowed. Then the cocoa nibs or dried beans are shipped from Mindo to Dexter, Michigan, where they are made into their delectable chocolates, cocoa butter, and cocoa powder.

Although Mindo is not Fair Trade certified, the price paid per pound for cacao is comparable or better than Fair Trade prices. Crops on the farm are not sprayed with any pesticides and no artificial fertilizers are used, and the farm received its organic certification in Ecuador in 2010.

Try **Mindo** alone or with **Unity Vibrations** kombucha for a splendid Valentine's treat!

While the political and economic battles continue, we can at least be assured that organic growing methods do not endanger the health of workers and their families.

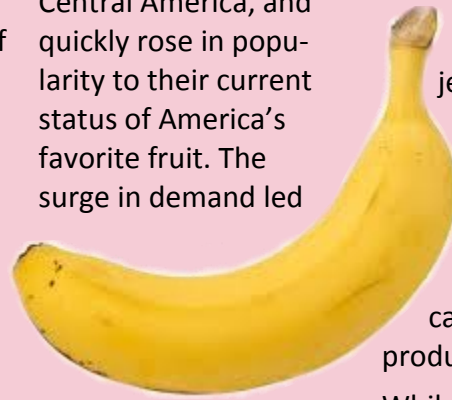
A Peek at Produce - Why Organic Bananas?

—By Jen Whaley

To accommodate the needs of YFC's diverse clientele, our Produce Department tries to offer members a mix of organic and lower-priced conventional items. For those concerned about pesticide residues in produce, we pay particular attention to higher-residue items listed in the Environmental Working Group's [Dirty Dozen list](http://ewg.org/foodnews/list) (ewg.org/foodnews/list). However, this list often does not tell the whole story, as is the case with bananas.

Bananas have a sordid history as a catalyst for corporate greed and third-world exploitation. They were introduced to U.S. markets

in the early 20th century with the expansion of railroads into Central America, and quickly rose in popularity to their current status of America's favorite fruit. The surge in demand led



to the creation of "banana republics," corrupt countries where the political system favors large agriculture corporations over public welfare. The fruit's fragility also made it difficult to grow and transport the "perfect-looking" fruit that American markets demand. In order to

achieve the perfect banana, workers on Central American commercial plantations are often subjected to a toxic soup of herbicides, pesticides and fungicides, leading to allergic, pulmonary, cancerous, and reproductive ailments.

While the political and economic battles continue, we can at least be assured that organic growing methods do not endanger the health of workers and their families. So despite not making the Dirty Dozen list, the co-op will continue to carry only organic (and when available, fair trade) bananas.

New Check Writing Policy!

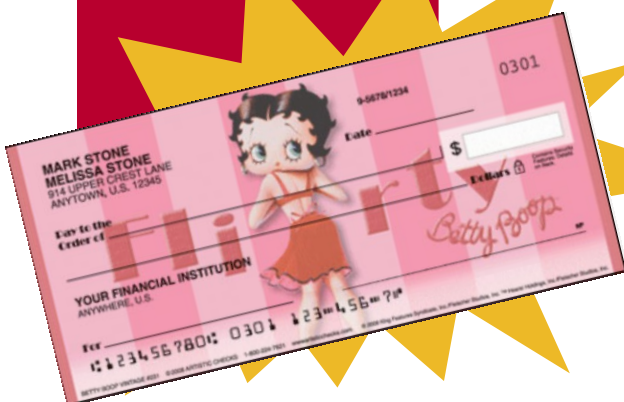
—By Keith Shoemaker

With many people changing over to debit cards and the rising level of check fraud, the Ypsi Food Co-op has put a new check writing policy in place starting this year in 2013.

The new policy will be that the Co-op will accept

checks only from current members for up to the amount in their Fair Share balance per day. Non-members or members who would like to write checks for larger amounts may apply for exception.

Your Fair Shares balance is listed on your 2013 member card, or ask the cashier to look up your balance.



Fair Trade Roses for Your Valentine

—By Lisa Bashert

Buying One World Fair Trade flowers for your sweetheart helps workers on flower farms around the world to work in a healthier environment, send their children to school, and put nutritious food on their tables. Your purchase ensures a better way of life for the farmers and workers who grow the flowers, as well as better environmental stewardship.

To receive Fair Trade certification, companies are required to show they provide sustainable environmental, social and economic conditions for workers. Fair Trade flower growers are primarily women. Certification supports basic benefits for women workers, like fair wages, paid maternity leave, and childcare.

Fair Trade flowers are gorgeous. And the recipient of your gift of flowers will feel even more honored to know that your gift makes the world a better place, too.



Feel The Love!

February Events

Sun Feb 3 2pm –and– Mon Feb 11 6pm
New Member Orientation

“Get to Know Your Co-op!” with a short presentation and a tour of the store. All new members are invited. Receive a 12% discount for attending!

Monday Feb 4, 6-8pm

Monthly Permaculture Meeting

Growing Hope Center, 922 W Michigan, Ypsilanti
Join 'Abundant Michigan' for our monthly permaculture meeting at the Growing Hope Center. Entitled, "Guild-Based Economic Activities," we will be creating functional guilds that work cooperatively towards abundance in food, water, materials, and lowered bills. Suggested donation: \$10 or trade equivalent.

Thursday Feb 8, Potluck 6:00pm, Film 7:00pm
Film: “The Power of Community”

Downtown Ypsi Library, 229 W Michigan, Ypsi
Immediately following the 6pm Growing Hope Community Potluck—all are invited! The Sustainability Film Series is co-sponsored by YFC, the Ypsi District Library, Growing Hope, and Transition Ypsi. “The Power of Community” focuses on the creative choices Cubans made in the face of Peak Oil, when Soviets cut off all imports and changed their way of life & agriculture.

Wednesday Feb 27, 7:00pm

Candle Making with Amy Lesser!

Join Amy at YFC to learn the art of making real beeswax candles. \$5 class materials fee entitles you to take home one candle and a bunch of know-how. (RSVP by 2/24/13 to lisa@ypsifoodcoop.org or 734-483-1520.)

General Manager Looks Back on 2012

—By Corinne Sikorski

The past 18 months have been full of changes in the world, in the country, in our community and in our cooperative. We are in an era where corporations are struggling to maintain their profits, where many issues regarding workers' rights are being challenged, and where growth as measured by corporate wealth is being questioned everyday.

Our Co-op has grown from a time when the word "co-op" was unknown or misunderstood, to the present when much of our community shares YFC's values: good clean food, local products and supporting our local economy, creating a sustainable business, environmental stewardship, and a sense of "place" that contributes to the lives of the people that live and work and shop here. These values have been at the heart of our mission for more than 38 years.

The Co-op now has \$1.6 million in annual sales; experienced double-digit growth for at least the past 7 years; and grew 18% in 2012 over the previous year. Though small in the world of food co-ops, we are one of the longest-lived and most thriving businesses in Ypsilanti. YFC

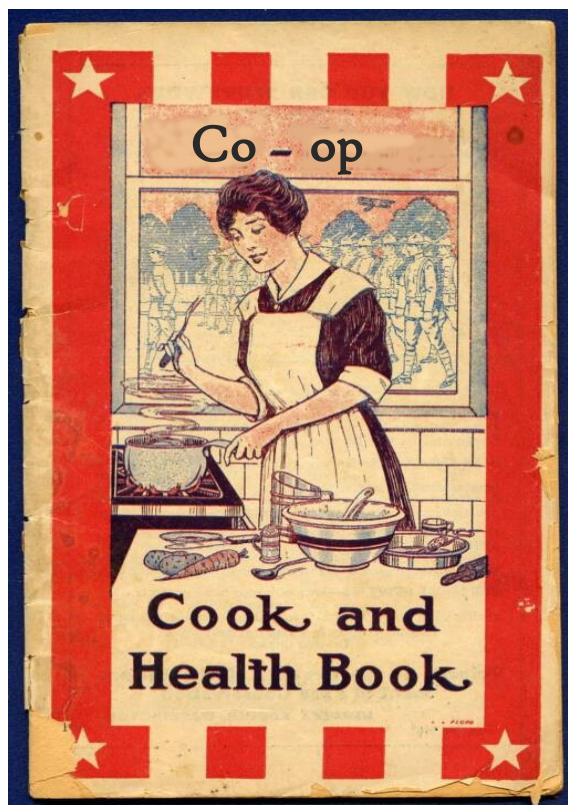
strives to provide more food to a broader spectrum of residents; to provide more outreach and education opportunities to all; to provide a growing market for the local community of urban farmers; to continue to be leaders in all aspects of sustainability and environmental stewardship; and to provide better wages to more of our employees.



As the Co-op evolves and grows, there have been many struggles. We cannot be all things, to all people, all the time! Competing with chains and big box stores continues to be a challenge.

Chains receive a larger discount on wholesale prices, enabling them to maintain higher profit margins and lower prices, plus higher staff benefits.

Yet, in 2013, we will continue to meet those challenges and thrive as a business owned and controlled by members of our community. We will continue our intentional growth and the expansion of the store to create added value for our members, staff and community! Watch the newsletter for monthly updates as we continue with additions and improvements to your Co-op grocery store!



The Ypsi Food Co-op Cook Book will be open for submissions until the end of March. Recipes are welcome from the entire YFC community—shoppers, members, and staff—especially as they utilize ingredients from the Co-op. Our hope is to compile the best recipes (and your illustrations/poems/stories) into a cook book to be available by summertime. There's also the possibility that a recipe will be added to our deli/bakery repertoire to be sold in the store. Could it be yours?

Submissions should include the name and phone number of the author and a title for the dish. Multiple submissions are welcome! Drop off your favorite recipes at the checkout counter in the store or email them to Clara at clara@ypsifoodcoop.org.

Submit your best recipes (with your illustrations, poems, stories) by March 31, 2013

YPSILANTI FOOD CO-OP

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